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## LOOKING CLOSER AT CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS: DIAGNOSING AND IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPT OF CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS IN THE EFL CONTEXT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the increased mobility – with a growing tendency of people travelling, working and studying abroad, and the democratisation of the Internet particularly visible on social media – has resulted in greater intercultural encounters. What is more, the massive exodus of people from the Middle East towards Europe confronted its citizens with humanitarian, cultural, ideological and logistic problems and raised a number of questions including the question of one's identity. Even though globalisation has become a fact, Shaules observantly states that “the intercultural contact we have in our ‘global village’ doesn't amount to us having ‘intercultural experiences’” (2007: 1). In view of these developments, it seems necessary to provide university students with *meaningful* intercultural education and to equip them with a set of useful skills that would allow them to not only approach cultural difference but also give them a chance to experience it.

This paper will emphasise the importance of critical cultural awareness (CCA), a key ingredient of Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Competence, which embraces a set of abilities that may help in dealing

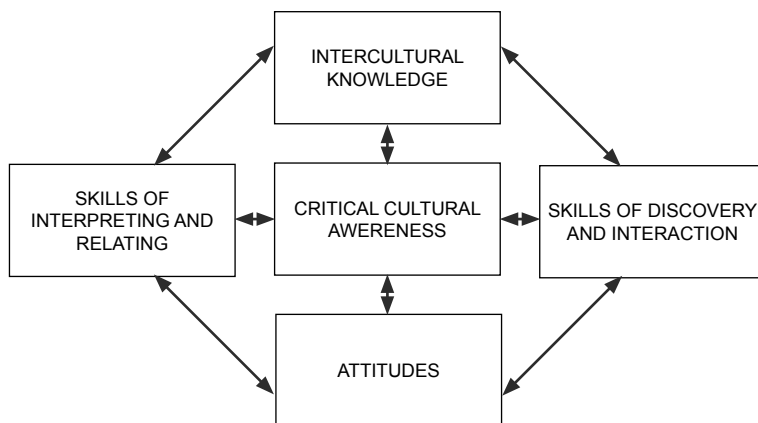
with intercultural misunderstandings, in particular those resulting from ethnocentric and stereotypical generalisations (Czajkowska-Prokop 2010). Also, an empirical research project (still in progress) aiming at finding a way to estimate the student's CCA and investigating the process of CCA raising will be briefly presented and discussed, with a focus on the practical implementation of CCA into the L2 educational context.

## 2. CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS AS A CRUCIAL COMPONENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The concept of intercultural competence, understood as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardorff 2006: 247–248), has established its position in the second language teaching in multicultural societies. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) offer an exhaustive review of numerous models which conceptualise the idea of intercultural competence.

One of the models that has gained considerable popularity in L2 education is Byram’s model of Intercultural Competence (1997), presented in Figure 1. The model consists of five interrelated elements, i.e., (a) intercultural knowledge, (b) skills of interpreting and relating, (c) skills of discovery and interaction, (d) attitudes, and (e) critical cultural awareness.

Critical cultural awareness (CCA), as defined by Byram, is “an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (1997: 63). In other words, it embraces a set of abilities that allow a person both to gain better insight into their own cultural identity and to adopt a more distant, unbiased perspective, which Kramsch calls the “third perspective” (1993: 210) or the “third place” (2013: 62), while approaching the other culture. Fostering CCA means promoting critical thinking skills, asking questions, problematising, increasing meta-awareness and developing a better understanding of what cultural values one follows (Byram and Masuhara 2013).



**Figure 1.** Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Competence

I would like to argue here that critical cultural awareness is the precondition for a successful development of intercultural competence as it fosters the ability to question the known and obvious, enabling students to get a bigger picture of their own identity. Without critical awareness of this kind, it is impossible to be ready and open to engage with and benefit from the encounters with the representatives of other cultures. There is no doubt that to become a successful intercultural speaker one cannot be restrained by one's fear of the unknown. However, this readiness for and openness to diversity and otherness should be based on the student's informed choice and conscious decision, and be part of his/her learner autonomy.

Even though Byram (2012) accentuates the importance and the centrality of CCA in his model of intercultural competence, it is said that some interpretations of the model overlook this element, or treat it superficially (Nugent and Catalano 2015: 16). That seems to be not the only problem with identifying the objectives of CCA and recognising its role in successful intercultural communication. As Young and Sachdev (2011: 89) report, the language teachers participating in their study view CCA as problematic since it would involve discussing

potentially controversial topics, which seems to be regarded as highly unwelcome in an L2 classroom. Moreover, as one teacher suggests, implementing CCA into the L2 class would interfere with the atmosphere of openness and sensitivity. Another obstacle in putting CCA into practice was observed by Houghton (2008) who focuses on the applicability of CCA in the Japanese educational context and points out that the students were very apprehensive about the concept of CCA as they confused it with criticising others, which is perceived as particularly inappropriate by the Japanese.

Both instances illustrate the problem of misinterpreting critical cultural awareness and what it stands for in the model of intercultural competence. A potential explanation may lie in its general definition which lacks specific descriptions and guidelines for how to raise CCA in practice and what particular abilities a person exhibiting a high degree of CCA should have. Therefore, a detailed list of categories together with their indicators (see Table 1) has been constructed specifically for the purposes of the empirical research project designed to investigate the process of raising university students' CCA during an EFL speaking course.

The first category, self-discovery, embraces those abilities which reflect students' understanding and knowledge of their own cultural identity and heritage. This is a crucial element in the model as it stresses the importance of evaluating and learning not only about *the other*, but through *the other* to better understand *the self* (Moncada Linares 2016: 132).

The decentring skills require the ability to challenge stereotypical and ethnocentric thinking, and to question one's judgement. This set of skills corresponds with objectivity, highlighted in Byram's (1997: 63) definition, which seems to be the prerequisite for avoiding hurtful generalisations and snap judgements.

The next category comprises abilities which require reflection and meta-awareness of the processes involved in an intercultural interaction. These highly cognitive abilities are crucial in raising critical cultural awareness and seem to be particularly relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century language classroom.

Without an understanding of the complex nature of the notion of culture, the intercultural encounters may not be fully capitalised on.

The category of cultural understanding highlights complexity and diversity as key features of intercultural relations.

**Table 1.** Categories and indicators of critical cultural awareness (CCA)

	CATEGORY	INDICATOR
A.	SELF-DISCOVERY	a. ability to define one's cultural identity
		b. ability to identify one's system of values
		c. knowledge of one's heritage
		d. understanding of the importance of one's cultural heritage
B.	DECENTRING	a. ability to challenge ethnocentric patterns
		b. ability to challenge stereotypical patterns
		c. ability to question one's own judgement
		d. ability to accept cultural difference
C.	REFLECTIVENESS and META-AWARENESS	a. ability to analyse a situation from different perspectives
		b. ability to critically reflect on one's own behaviour
		c. ability to adopt a distant perspective
		d. ability to operate on explicit shared concepts, e.g. ethnocentrism, stereotyping, value system, etc.
		e. willingness to compare C1 and OC
		f. ability to relativise
D.	CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING	a. understanding of the broad and complex notion of culture
		b. understanding diversity as a natural condition
		c. understanding and respecting one's right to having a different opinion
		d. understanding the complexity of intercultural relations
E.	ATTITUDES	a. curiosity of the unknown
		b. sense of equality and respect
		c. willingness to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds
		d. ability to sympathise with the representatives of other cultures

The final category represents the affective side of critical cultural awareness. Even though attitudes are represented in Byram's model as a separate constituent (1997: 34), some fundamental aspects like a sense of equality, respect and sympathy still need to be addressed while discussing critical cultural awareness.

This detailed specification of critical cultural awareness allows for a closer investigation into what it means to be critically culturally aware and what the process of raising students' CCA looks like in practice.

### 3. DIAGNOSING AND DEVELOPING CCA IN AN EFL CONTEXT: AN EMPIRICAL PROJECT

The rationale behind the research project presented here has to do not only with gaining a deeper understanding of the process of raising students' critical cultural awareness but also with answering the question of how L2 teachers should raise CCA in practice.

While the data collected in the empirical project reported here allow for various analyses, the focus of the present paper is on discussing the research design and the novel tool used in the project. As indicated above, there are problems with understanding what CCA embraces and, in effect, how it can be implemented in the L2 classroom. It seems important to stress the didactic value of the tool and provide examples of CCA-oriented techniques. Therefore, the emphasis in what follows will be placed on describing the research tools devised to find out about the learner's initial level of CCA and develop it in the course of L2 teaching and learning.

#### *3.1. The aim of the study*

The main aim of the study is to estimate the EFL university students' degree of critical cultural awareness and to trace the dynamic process of becoming more culturally aware. Four research questions were formulated to achieve the aim, namely: (1) What is Polish EFL university students' level of critical cultural aware-

ness? (2) Do the CCA-oriented tasks contribute to a change in the students' degree of CCA? (3) Is there any correlation between the particular categories of CCA? (4) Which elements of CCA are reflected in the students' journals? Are there any patterns/changes?

### *3.2. Target group and the context of the study*

The target group consisted of 70 students majoring in English from two universities in Southern Poland (52 students in the experimental group and 18 in the control group). Fifty-eight of the students completed the pre-questionnaires, 59 students filled in the post-questionnaires, and 52 students (41 females and 11 males) took both questionnaires and systematically kept the reflective journals. Since the research project was integrated into the first-cycle EFL speaking course, the participants' advanced level of English allowed me to design and administer both questionnaires in English, and made it possible for the students to write their reflective journals in English as well.

### *3.3. Data collection procedure*

The process of data collection took 11 weeks and embraced three phases. During the first phase, the pre-questionnaire was administered to 58 participants in both experimental and control groups in order to assess their initial degree of critical cultural awareness. It is important to add here that the questionnaire had been piloted with the help of 22 MA students who completed the questionnaire and commented on its clarity, possible ambiguity and difficulty in answering the questions.

The second phase took nine weeks during which nine reflective tasks were performed in the experimental groups only. Each task was followed by a reflective journal kept by the students on an e-learning university platform. In total, 353 journal entries sent in by the students were collected.

In the final week, the post-questionnaire was completed by 59 students from both experimental and control groups. Additionally, those participants who kept reflective journals filled in a reflection time evaluation sheet in which they left their feedback on the reflective tasks and the journals.

### *3.4. Data analysis*

In the analysis of pre- and post-questionnaires both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The focus is mainly on the correlation between the particular categories of CCA and the additional data collected in the questionnaire (i.e., the number of L2s, visited countries, etc.). The results of the pre- and post-questionnaires were also compared in terms of their statistical significance.

The journal entries were analysed using a coding system with 15 initial codes constructed on the basis of the indicators of CCA (Table 1). The coding system used in the journal analysis follows a coding procedure proposed by Pidgeon and Henwood (2004) and Wilczyńska and Michońska-Stadnik (2010). Since all journal entries were typed and sent by the students online, it was much easier to code, save, and retrieve the analysed fragments. The main aim of the analysis was to look for possible repetitions and patterns which would illustrate the process of gaining critical cultural awareness.

### *3.5. Research tools*

#### *3.5.1. Questionnaire*

The questionnaire administered at the beginning (pre-questionnaire) and at the end of the data collection procedure (post-questionnaire) aimed at estimating the level of the participants' critical cultural awareness. It comprised two major parts: a list of 50 statements to which the respondents reacted on a 5-point Likert scale (1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 being equivalent to "strongly agree") and questions concerning the students' personal data, such as age, gender, their home town's population, the number of foreign languages spoken and the number of visited countries. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Each statement in the first part of the questionnaire corresponds with a particular indicator of CCA presented in Table 1 and all the categories have an equal representation of 10 statements per each. The indicators were carefully mixed in the questionnaire so as not to suggest



what was being measured. Since the target group comprised university students in their first cycle of study, the statements were formulated in such a way as to enable the students to refer to them personally.

### 3.5.2. Reflective tasks

After the pre-questionnaire had been completed by the participants, nine reflective tasks were performed in experimental groups during a period of nine weeks. The tasks were carefully selected and designed not only to cover the principal objectives of CCA (see Table 2) but also to be integrated with the syllabus and aims of an EFL speaking course.

**Table 2.** Reflective tasks and their objectives

	<b>TASK</b>	<b>CATEGORY OF CCA</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>
1.	“Dominoes”	self-discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finding difference in similarity</li> <li>• identifying one’s values</li> </ul>
2.	“Revisiting childhood”	self-discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring one’s cultural identity</li> <li>• knowledge of one’s heritage</li> </ul>
3.	“Euro rail”	decentring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenging stereotypical thinking</li> <li>• elements of empathy</li> </ul>
4.	“Aliens visiting Earth”	decentring reflectiveness and meta-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defamiliarising the obvious</li> <li>• asking critical questions</li> </ul>
5.	“First impressions”	decentring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenging stereotypical thinking</li> <li>• treating diversity as a natural condition</li> </ul>
6.	“Reversed ethnocentrism”	cultural understanding reflectiveness and meta-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• challenging ethnocentric patterns</li> <li>• understanding the complexity of the notion of culture</li> </ul>
7.	“Odd one out”	attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting empathy and equality</li> </ul>
8.	“Music of the world”	cultural understanding attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhancing curiosity of the unknown</li> </ul>
9.	“A dream come true”	attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting attitudes of openness and inclusiveness</li> <li>• promoting equality</li> </ul>

\* The tasks have been adapted from the education pack “All Different – All Equal” (Brander et al. 1995).

Each task involved pair-work or group-work, and took no more than 25 minutes (during a 90-minute lesson). Detailed descriptions of the tasks and the follow-up reflective questions can be found in Appendix B. Although I worked with four groups exhibiting different classroom dynamics, the content and the instructions of the tasks were the same in each group. Time for individual reflection on what happened in the classroom was at home where the students were asked to complete their reflective journals after each class.

### *3.5.3. Reflective journals*

After each lesson, the students were asked to keep a reflective journal which was uploaded on a university e-learning platform. The advantage of the journal being kept online is that the students can express their opinions more freely and devote as much time as they want for thinking, reflecting and finally writing. It is also very practical when it comes to collecting and analysing the data, since the journals are typed and saved in convenient files.

Each journal entry had a set of 3–4 critical questions designed to help the students to reflect on both retrospective, i.e. what happened in the classroom, and introspective reflection, i.e. what they were thinking at that moment. There was no word limit, and the participants had six days after each class to submit their journal entries. It is also important to note that the journal entries submitted by the participants to the platform were visible only to the teacher and not the other students, which allowed them to venture more personal reflections.

As the journals were administered in the form of a homework assignment, all of the entries were written in English. It is important to note, though, that the students' linguistic performance was not taken into consideration in the analysis.

### *3.5.4. Reflection time: Evaluation sheet*

Having completed all nine reflective journals and having filled in the post-questionnaire, the participants were asked to reflect on the tasks performed in the classroom and on the reflection time they spent in the process of writing a journal.

The main aim of the evaluation sheet was to gain feedback from the students on four aspects of the reflection time which covered both the CCA-oriented tasks and the reflective journals, namely: (a) students' preferences regarding the reflective tasks, (b) the amount of time they spent on writing the journal, (c) the most interesting part of keeping a reflective journal, and (d) the most challenging part of writing a journal.

### *3.6. Limitations of the study*

Since the research aimed at investigating a sensitive issue which is far from being tangible, the major limitation concerns the accuracy of the observations which, due to the nature of the subject, were made based on the students' reactions to the statements that indirectly indicated specific elements of critical cultural awareness. It could be argued that some of the statements in the questionnaire might have been interpreted differently and that it was sometimes difficult to avoid ambiguity. However, there is no doubt that critical cultural awareness is perceived as a continuous, non-linear and dynamic process. That is why the data collected from the questionnaires was supported with a qualitative analysis of the reflective journal entries which allowed a deeper analysis of the process, even though diary studies in general are not free from limitations, either (see McKay 2009: 229).

Another important issue that needs to be taken into consideration is the socio-political context of the study. Due to the fact that Europe is struggling with the migration crisis, the topics of cultural diversity and intercultural relations appear in the media more often than ever. Since the process of data collection took 11 weeks and one of the aims was to measure the students' degree of CCA after a nine-week period of instruction, I suspected that a number of sensitive cultural issues (such as terrorist attacks or new waves of refugees seeking asylum in Europe) would be presented and discussed in the media. To keep track of the socio-political discourse which often referred to the cultural aspect of such events, I also kept a journal where notes referring to the socio-political incidents were written down.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH PLANS

Critical cultural awareness should be considered a necessary foundation for the meaningful development of intercultural competence. Without acquiring an open frame of mind, which is the backbone of critical cultural awareness, one would not be able to develop intercultural competence adequately. This is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes will not serve their purpose if not accompanied by this critical awareness of culture. Without CCA, intercultural competence can only be developed superficially by not achieving the educational goal of CCA, which is to foster one's personal growth (Byram 2012: 9). Secondly, it is difficult to embrace and understand the values of a different culture without gaining insight into one's own cultural identity. In particular, in monocultural contexts, the importance of discovering one's own cultural identity in order to perceive the other is even more crucial. Thirdly, being able to abide by the pragmatic rules and principles can only happen if one develops an insight into cross-cultural differences and if one has adopted a non-judgemental stance towards cultural issues. Adopting this critical perspective allows for variability and divergence that is essential for learning about and embracing the new and unfamiliar. CCA is an exercise in abstract and critical thinking that broadens one's horizons.

It seems vital to examine more carefully the process of raising one's CCA and consider its implementation in practice, i.e. in the process of L2 learning and teaching. The design of the project discussed above offers a novel tool which aims at estimating the students' level of critical cultural awareness and which is based on a detailed list of specifications furthering a better understanding of the nature and role of CCA in the L2 classroom reality. Moreover, the project promotes nine reflective tasks and their follow-up critical questions that can be easily incorporated into an L2 syllabus and that make it possible for students to discover the seemingly obvious aspects of everyday life from a more distanced perspective.

As far as my further research plans are concerned, critical cultural awareness exhibits elements of a dynamic, non-linear and emergent system and so I intend to interpret the results with reference to the premises of chaos/complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman 1997; Johnson 2007; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008).

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## APPENDIX A

*Questionnaire*

*The following questionnaire aims at investigating the EFL university students' beliefs and attitudes. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: a rating task where you are asked to rate each statement on the scale provided and some additional questions concerning your L2s and the countries you visited. The questionnaire is anonymous and the results will be used solely for research purposes. The questionnaire should not take more than 15 minutes. Your honest opinions will be very much appreciated. Thank you for your co-operation!*

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**I. Please rate the following statements by circling/crossing one point on the scale:**

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – neither agree nor disagree;  
4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree

1) I feel excited when I can talk to foreigners.	1	2	3	4	5
2) I have a clearly defined system of values.	1	2	3	4	5
3) I talk to different people before I make an important decision.	1	2	3	4	5
4) Stereotyping is a sign of ignorance.	1	2	3	4	5
5) Religion is an element of culture.	1	2	3	4	5
6) Whenever I discuss a controversial issue, I try to understand all parts of the problem.	1	2	3	4	5
7) I look for opportunities to interact with different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
8) I feel strongly attached to the place I was born.	1	2	3	4	5
9) I do not like being criticised.	1	2	3	4	5
10) Attitudes are an element of culture.	1	2	3	4	5

11) I am proud of being part of my nation.	1	2	3	4	5
12) I talk to different people before I make an important decision.	1	2	3	4	5
13) I try to understand customs of diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
14) I find it funny that the Japanese bow while greeting each other.	1	2	3	4	5
15) My heritage is part of my cultural identity.	1	2	3	4	5
16) I do not mind doing self-evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
17) I do not mind going to a Muslim country as part of an exchange programme.	1	2	3	4	5
18) Whenever I disagree with someone I try to convince them to change their opinion.	1	2	3	4	5
19) I often have second thoughts about the decisions I make.	1	2	3	4	5
20) All people have equal rights to choose where they want to live.	1	2	3	4	5
21) I would like my children to know about the history of where they come from.	1	2	3	4	5
22) When I meet with a foreign student I pay attention to differences between us.	1	2	3	4	5
23) Whenever someone expresses a different opinion than mine I take it personally.	1	2	3	4	5
24) I have never really thought about my system of values.	1	2	3	4	5
25) When I talk to foreigners I realise that our language is not the only difference.	1	2	3	4	5
26) I think the Americans are less educated than the Europeans.	1	2	3	4	5
27) I like tasting new oriental dishes.	1	2	3	4	5
28) I like talking to the older generations about the history of my family.	1	2	3	4	5
29) Nobody is objectively right or wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
30) I am excited to talk to exchange students because I am very curious about the differences between us.	1	2	3	4	5
31) Stereotypes provide good insight into what different nationalities are really like.	1	2	3	4	5
32) Race is an element of culture.	1	2	3	4	5
33) Whenever I am abroad I feel I learn something about my own country.	1	2	3	4	5
34) Identifying oneself with a specific cultural heritage has little value.	1	2	3	4	5



35) When I hear about the refugees I often imagine what they could feel.	1	2	3	4	5
36) I feel I am a citizen of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
37) I don't mind if any of my family members married a person from a different cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5
38) Classes in which stereotypes are discussed are useful.	1	2	3	4	5
39) I feel that I am almost always right.	1	2	3	4	5
40) My cultural identity is defined by my nationality.	1	2	3	4	5
41) Cultural diversity is a threat.	1	2	3	4	5
42) If possible, I would like to host an Erasmus student at home.	1	2	3	4	5
43) I find it strange when somebody does not have a Christmas tree for Christmas.	1	2	3	4	5
44) Cultural diversity is a feature of the modern world.	1	2	3	4	5
45) Cultural diversity may bring benefits to the community.	1	2	3	4	5
46) If I learnt that I behave in an ethnocentric way, I would like to change it.	1	2	3	4	5
47) I feel being part of a diverse global community.	1	2	3	4	5
48) It does not matter where I live, I would feel at home anywhere in the world.	1	2	3	4	5
49) Culture means more than nationality.	1	2	3	4	5
50) I would imagine myself volunteering in Africa.	1	2	3	4	5

## II. Please tick or fill in as appropriate.

- a) Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- b) Age: ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35 & over
- c) Have you ever studied/lived abroad?  
☐ YES ☐ NO
- d) How many foreign languages do you speak?  
☐ English ☐ Italian ☐ German  
☐ French ☐ Russian ☐ Spanish ☐ Other: .....
- e) How many countries have you visited? .....
- f) How big is your home town (in the number of people)?  
☐ 1,000,000 and more ☐ 40,000–100,000  
☐ 500,000–1,000,000 ☐ 10,000–40,000  
☐ 200,000–500,000 ☐ 10,000 and less  
☐ 100,000–200,000

## APPENDIX B

*Reflective tasks*

	NAME	TASK DESCRIPTION	QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION
1.	Dominoes	Students gather in the middle of the class and each student formulates two opinions expressing their value system – each opinion for each hand. A person from the class who shares the same opinion takes the hand accordingly and adds another opinion. The activity ends when a circle is formed.	What could the aim of the task be? Do you think you achieved it? If yes, how? Was it easy for you to think of the values that you think are important to you? What were your thoughts when you found a person sharing the same opinion? Did you expect to have something in common with this person? Have you learned anything about yourself from this task?
2.	Revisiting childhood	Students are asked to work in groups of three on an English children's book. Each group discusses the content of the book in terms of the message and values that are hidden in the story. Next, they answer the questions: Do you think parents should read their children? What can we learn about the heritage of our society from children's books?	Do you think nursery rhymes/fairy tales changed something in your perception or understanding of the world surrounding you? Which fairy tale/book had the greatest impact on you when you were a child? How did it influence you? What values can children learn from reading fairy tales/children's books?

3.	Euro rail	Each student is given a list of people from different countries with a short stereotypical description of their personal details. Each student has to choose three people he/she would like to travel with and three they would least like to travel with. Once they are ready, students work in groups of 4 and share their choices and reasons and check if there are any similarities. Next, they come up with a common list of three pluses and three minuses. Finally, the choices will be discussed with the rest of the class along with justifications for choosing those people.	What were the major factors that determined your individual decisions? What was most difficult? Why? What was the aim of this activity? Do you think you achieved it? How does it feel to be in a situation in which nobody would want to share a train compartment with you?
4.	Aliens visiting Earth	Students are divided into two groups: aliens and humans. Aliens are focused on collecting the data for their research into human behaviour and habits regarding some situations involving crime, e.g. graffiti, robbery, bribery, etc. The role of humans is to answer the questions as accurately as possible explaining all the details of even the most obvious aspects of the situation.	What was your part (human/alien)? How did you feel playing this part? What was difficult/easy? What was the aim of this activity? Did you achieve it? Was there anything that you learned from this activity?
5.	First impressions	Students work in groups of 4–5. Each group gets a set of 4–5 portraits of people from different cultural backgrounds (a Serbian old man, a Peruvian mother with a child, a Japanese girl, a Sikh, and a representative of one of the tribes from Papua New Guinea). Students' task is to react to the pictures, write their first impressions on the bottom of the page, fold the paper, and give it to the next person. When everyone is ready, students unfold the paper and discuss their first impressions answering the follow-up questions.	What did you base your impressions on? How different were your answers? Why? What have you learned from this activity?

6.	Reversed ethnocentrism	Students learn about the identities of the people from the task "First impressions." The teacher presents the statistics of students' first impressions on the man from Papua New Guinea focusing on the words which were used most frequently (i.e., "strange," "weird," "different," "scary," etc.). Next, the idea of ethnocentrism is explained to the students. Finally, they have to imagine they are a tourist from Papua New Guinea visiting Poland and answer the question: What would the person consider strange in the Polish behaviour: traditions, customs, habits, appearance? Why?	Why do you think people should be aware of ethnocentrism? What are the consequences of tourists' ethnocentric behaviour?
7.	Odd one out	Each student has a coloured spot on their forehead. Players should not know what colour their spot is. Students are supposed to get into groups of the same colour spot without any verbal communication. After students finally get into groups they will have to answer a set of questions, e.g. How did you feel at the moment you first met a person with the same spot as you?	Have you ever felt rejected by a group? What was the situation? What did you feel? Have you ever been part of a group which rejected another person? What was it like?
8.	Music of the world	A song performed by a Tuareg group of nomads is played at the end of the lesson. Students need to guess where it comes from. They also have to imagine what the lyrics are about. Students discuss their associations and impressions in pairs. The teacher asks students some follow-up questions: What did you feel when you heard this song? Have you ever listened to such music before? Why isn't such music played on the mainstream radio?	What did you think when you heard this song? Would you be interested in visiting Mali and getting to know something more about Tuareg culture? Why/why not?

9.	A dream come true	<p>Students have some time to reflect on their own how they would like things to be in the future concerning job, family, housing, civil rights, personal development, etc.</p> <p>Next, students work in groups and share their visions of the future and write them down or draw a graph. Then, they are asked to write three concrete things that prevent them from pursuing their aspirations and three things they can do to get closer to pursuing their dreams. Finally, students will discuss the following questions:</p> <p>Do you think that everybody should have the right to pursue their aspirations?</p> <p>Do you feel that some people may have more chances than others? Who and why and is it fair?</p> <p>How can you support each other in practical ways to overcome the barriers?</p>	<p>Do you think your dreams are universal or specific to your country/region?</p> <p>Do you think everyone is entitled to pursuing their dreams? What do you think are the dreams of the refugees (people escaping war)? Do you think they have similar dreams? Why/why not?</p>
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